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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/507,465	02/22/2000	Rodney C. Langley	M4065.0018/P018-A	2423

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EXAMINER

ANDERSON, MATTHEW A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1765

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DATE MAILED: 02/04/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/507,465

Applicant(s)

LANGLEY ET AL.

Examiner

Matthew A. Anderson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 November 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 10, 12-16 and 26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10 and 12-16, 26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 February 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 10, 12-13, 16, 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Helms et al. (US 4,869,801).

An embodiment represented in Fig. 4 of Helms and described in detail in col. 4 lines 13+ anticipates the present invention. Disclosed is a RIE (i.e. a plasma) etching apparatus and method. The wafer is placed on a chuck plate which is coupled to a pedestal with a central hollow shaft. The chuck and pedestal combine to define cooling passages (73, 74, 75 in Fig. 4) connected in fluid communication with the hollow shaft.

The pedestal is rotated by the motor (84). The apparatus is described as used in a RIE chamber with cooling and rotation. In Figs. 4 is depicted a method of removing the wafer by push rod (51) coupled to a lift actuator (40) and spider (46 with pins 47, 47'). The actuated push rods push up and the lift pins (47) lift the wafer from the chuck. The hollow cooled shaft of the pedestal (Fig. 4, 45) moves in response to actuation of the wafer lift mechanism

It is unclear if the cooling medium is limited to only a liquid.

However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the present invention to use a gas coolant since Helms et al. suggests as much in col. 3 line 1.

In respect to claims, 10, 26, one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious that the hollow shaft of Helms would have been at least "capable of one-way communication" of gaseous coolant to the coolant chamber because all such hollow shafts are inherently "capable of one-way communication depending on the use of pumps or pressure gradients.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. Claim 14, 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Helms et al. as applied to the above claims, and further in view of Saeki et al. (US 5460684) and Nozawa et al. (US 5290,381).

Helms is described above.

Helms does not explicitly disclose an electrostatic chuck.

Saeki et al. discloses in the abstract an electrostatic chuck in a plasma apparatus used in a plasma etching process.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the present invention to combine the Helms et al. and the Saeki et al. references because then the placement of the wafer would be even more accurate than as required by Helms et al. since the electrostatic chuck would preclude movement during processing.

The combination does not disclose the optimization of process parameters.

Nozawa et al. discloses a plasma etching apparatus and discloses using certain set process parameters in col. 7. The parameters specified include gas flow and wafer temperature.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the present invention to combine Nozawa et al. with the above combination because then more control over the etching profile produced (see Figs. 5-7 of Nozawa et al.) would be expected.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 11/15/2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The argument that the hollow shaft is not capable of one way communication of a gaseous coolant to the coolant chamber is not logical. All hollow shafts are at least

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inherently capable of accommodating one-way movement of gas barring some other structure within it. Helms et al. suggests gaseous coolants in col. 3 lines 1-5. The rejection is stated as a USC 102/103 rejection and not as a pure USC 102.

The argument that Fig 4 somehow shows that Helms is incapable of one way communication is not convincing. Inlet and outlet flows are not through the same tubes and thus are only in one direction – i.e. that of further toward the exhaust where the hot coolant is removed from the system.

The claim that the coolants do not flow through a central bore of a shaft in Figs. 2 and 3 of Helms is not convincing. The examiner notes that Fig. 4 shows the central hollow shaft arrangement claimed.

The argument that Helms is a suspect reference is not convincing. Since Helms has been published as a United States Patent, the examiner gives full confidence to its teachings. The examiner notes that Fig. 2 shows unmarked passages on the left side of the shaft mirroring the gas introduction lines. These, to the rational engineering observer, would be seen as outlet lines.

The argument that claims 14-15 are allowable because Helms is not a good reference is not convincing. The examiner has presented a motivation for the combination on which the rejection was made and stands by his earlier assessment concerning these claims.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

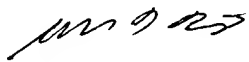
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew A. Anderson whose telephone number is (703) 308-0086. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, 6:30-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Benjamin Utech can be reached on (703) 308-3836. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

MAA
February 1, 2003


BENJAMIN L. UTECH
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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